

ACACIA ICTs AND COMMUNITY-BASED DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

**AN EVALUTION STUDY OF ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT
OF WOMEN THROUGH ICTs AND
AHI -ACACIA PROJECTS IN UGANDA.**

A CONSULTANCY REPORT

SUBMITTED TO

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT RESEARCH CENTRE (IDRC)

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January 2001

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Evaluation and Rationale

This study was commissioned in the second week of November 2000 by the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) to evaluate the two IDRC supported Acacia Projects; (i) African Highlands Initiative – (AHI), Kabale, Uganda, and (ii) The Council for Economic Empowerment of Women of Africa – CEEWA Project in Kampala. Both projects aim at accessing people with relevant information through the use of ICTs to improve their livelihoods through the various activities they undertake.

This evaluation was carried out after over a year since the two Projects received approval of funding by IDRC. This was part of the wider evaluation of several other IDRC Acacia funded projects that had been running for a period of over a year.

Evaluation Questions

Broadly, this evaluation aimed at investigating the two projects (African Highlands Initiative-AHI, Kabale, Uganda and the Council for Economic Empowerment of Women of Africa – CEEWA Project in Kampala). The specific evaluation questions were:

- What is the nature of the two projects' achievements?
- What are the successes of the projects?
- What are the failures of the projects?
- What is the nature of the outputs and outcomes, if any, of the projects in the communities they serve, including the nature of changed skills, capacities, and information/knowledge among community dwellers?

Objectives of the Study

From the above evaluation questions, the following general objectives were to:

- Investigate the two projects (African Highlands Initiative-AHI, Kabale, Uganda and the Council for Economic Empowerment of Women of Acacia- CEEWA Project in Kampala) and to document the nature (achievements, successes or failures) of the project operations to date.
- Investigate and document the outputs and outcomes, if any, of the projects in the communities they serve, including the nature of changed skills, capacities, and information/knowledge among community dwellers.

Within the framework of the broad objectives, specific objectives were delineated. These included to:

- Assess Information Communication Technologies knowledge and usage among project beneficiaries, and possible changes as a result of ICTs usage and application.

- Determine the extent to which ICTs had been introduced in existing organisations and community, and delineating possible changes in the organisations and community as a result of ICTs usage and application.

- Assess the appreciation and relevance of usage and application of ICTs in the community where the projects are being implemented.

Definition/Clarification of Key Concepts

ICTs: - This was taken in general terms to refer to both modern ICTs such as Internet, E-mails as well as traditional ICTs including telephone, radio etc.

The Acacia Project in the Country

The Acacia project in Uganda is supported by IDRC as a pilot initiative in the country aimed at empowering poor rural communities to improve their socio-economic conditions and acquire capacity to address their local needs through the use of modern ITCs. According to the Progress Report by the Program Secretariat (July-September, 2000), the Acacia Project is intended to maximise the use of telecentre projects through establishing complementary applications useful to rural community needs such as telemedicine, electronic delivery of agricultural information and equipping women entrepreneurs with information and skills. The specifics of the projects, which were evaluated in this study, are presented here below.

IDRC approved funding of the ICTs Project to be implemented by CEEWA- Uganda in 1999. The Project Manager was recruited at the beginning of October 1999. The Project is undertaking an ICT Project to promote women economic empowerment through use of ICTs. The main objective is to enable women entrepreneurs and women Organization that promote enterprise development to explore ways and means of exploiting ICTs for community economic empowerment. The specific objectives of the Project are:

- Identifying information needs in trade and commerce of micro and small scale women entrepreneurs and women Organization for enterprise development in Kampala, Nabweru and Buwama sites, and to obtain relevant and useful information from MSE associations and support institutions in Uganda that will meet the identified needs.

- To build a human resource capacity among participating women entrepreneurs, through training in entrepreneurship development and ICTs application in entrepreneurship and to train a cadre of trainers who will provide support to this sub-component as required.

- Establish a Women's Information Resource and Electronic Service (WIRES) at CEEWA offices in Kampala and connect it to two rural sites in Nabweru and Buwama.

- Monitor, evaluate and document the performance of the participating women entrepreneurs and women organization, and disseminate knowledge generated by the project.

On the other hand, African Highlands Eco-Regional Program (AHI) is a collaborative research program focussing on natural resource management (NRM) in the highlands of East and Central Africa. The project aims at strengthening agricultural research in East and Central Africa, and contribute to the development of communities vis-à-vis sustainable use of natural resources through usage and application of ICTs and other communication approaches in the community. It is envisaged that the ICTs and new approaches will enable

farmers to access relevant information from agricultural researchers, extension workers, traders and support agents. In summary, the goal, purpose and objectives of the AHI – Acacia Project as indicated in Project documents (Ocilaje, 2000) are:

Goal of AHI – Acacia Project

To contribute to development of communities and the sustainability of natural resources in the intensively cultivated highlands of Eastern Africa through application and management of ICTs and traditional communication.

Purpose of AHI - Acacia Project

To help farmers increase their knowledge and understanding of technological options in order to make better decisions at household and community levels so that they can produce and market effectively and sustainably skills in NRM.

Objectives of AHI- Acacia Project

- Increase farmers and stakeholders technological and market (and other) knowledge and understanding in the use of ICTs so that they can produce and market effectively.
- Motivate and create a capacity of communities to apply and utilise ICTs to meet their expressed needs with respect to production and marketing information.
- Set-up, support the development of the Telecentre network and identify the most effective combination of ICTs, which can be applied to enhance farmers' knowledge and skills in NRM and ensure the sustainability of the network.
- Understand the communication process and dynamics in the target communities and assess the factors (positive and negative) affecting the utilisation of ICTs for development.

Related Literature

There is little literature on ICTs performance and related relevance on Uganda. This evaluation together with the evaluation of other IDRC Acacia projects in Uganda is the first of its kind, hence limited literature on the subject. In addition, the introduction of modern ICTs is relatively recent in the country. According to Achia (2000), modern ICTs started becoming common around mid 1990s, especially with the Great Lakes crisis. Specifically, with IDRC Acacia funded projects not much literature has been generated on them given the short time they have been in operation. The available literature is mainly project specific, giving benchmark data (Kibombo and Kayabwe 2000; Asingwire, 2001). In other instances, a few remarks are made in form of project highlights (AHI – NARO, 2000). The various documentation available is mainly workshop proceedings or reports (Wamahiu, 2000).

Despite the limited literature available, challenges of introducing and using ICTs have been theoretically documented ranging from relevant information content needs, the slow pace at which rural people cope and appreciate the new technology, ensuring popular participation in the development process and sustainability

of the process (Achia, 2000; Madaya, 2000). Besides the right technology and the appropriate medium for communicating a particular message, the information that goes through a channel to a target audience (content) must be tailored to meet priority needs (Achia, 2000).

Organization of the Report

The rest of this report is organized under Four major Sections. Section 2.0 outlines the evaluation process. It provides presents among others, fieldwork details and problems that were encountered in carrying out this evaluation. Section Three provides the context of the evaluated Acacia projects, giving details of geographical location, socio-cultural and political environment, technological environment and projects profile, major activities and achievements. Section Four is a presentation of evaluation findings, while Section five contains the lessons emerging from the evaluation and recommendations.

2.0 THE EVALUATION PROCESS AND PROCEDURE

Description of the Process

2.1.1 Preparatory Phase

This evaluation was preceded by a Methodology Workshop for Researchers, which took place at Makerere Institute of Social Research (MISR) between October 19-22, 2000. Ms. Florence Etta of IDRC Nairobi facilitated the workshop. The purpose of the workshop was to review the instruments and discuss implementation plans. After the workshop, a number of suggestions were made on the instruments, which were incorporated before production of the final instruments.

2.1.2 Training of Research Assistants

Two Research Assistants were recruited to mainly administer individual questionnaires; 1 Research Assistant for the CEEWA Project and the other for AHI – Acacia Project, Kabale. The Research Assistants underwent a two-day training in the skills of interviewing, probing and recording answers.

Participation of Key Interest Groups in the Evaluation Process

All the key interest groups were involved in the evaluation process. During the methodology workshop, officers working with the projects that were going to be evaluated attended and contributed ideas. The two project managers of CEEWA and AHI – Kabale were in attendance. The qualitative methods of data collection that were applied, i.e., key informant interviews with the various stakeholders and focus group discussions ensured some level of participation by the key interest groups.

The dissemination and validation workshop that was held on March 29, 2001 provided an immense opportunity for all the key interest groups to participate in the evaluation process of CEEWA and AHI Acacia projects. The workshop which, was facilitated by the IDRC consultant (Dr. Wamahiu Sheila Parvyn) was attended by 20 participants including the official of Acacia National Secretariat and UNCST, Project Managers or their representatives of the two projects, Telecentre Managers of Nabweru, Nakaseke and Kabale, as well as selected beneficiaries (actual and potential) who at the same time were respondents during the evaluation from Kabale, Kampala, Mpigi and Wakiso districts. The list of workshop participants is shown in Appendix 2.

Evaluation Team Composition

An evaluation team of 3 members carried out this evaluation. Narathius Asingwire led the evaluation team as consultant. Asingwire who specialises in Policy Analysis has carried out several research projects for both local and international organizations including IDRC. He is currently Acting Head of Social Work and Social Administration Department at Makerere University.

Two female Research Assistants were recruited to help in data collection and processing. The two Research Assistants; Ms. Harriet Kemigisha and Ms. Baguma are University graduates of Social Sciences and Information Science respectively. They were both fluent in local languages, *Rukiga and Luganda*. Whereas the Research Assistants were instrumental in collecting information (i.e., from community members in the AHI – Project and women beneficiaries of CEEWA Project), editing and coding, the consultant conducted key informant interviews, analysed the data and wrote the report.

Fieldwork Details

This sub-section outlines the methods that were applied in carrying out this evaluation. It indicates, among others, the study participants, methods of data collection and analysis, and problems that were encountered in carrying out this evaluation.

2.4.1 Study Participants

The study population comprised of women beneficiaries of CEEWA – Acacia project (small women entrepreneurs) and community members in Rubaya Sub-county i.e., intended beneficiaries of AHI – Acacia Project. Seventy-eight (78) community members/individuals spread over 12 Parishes in the two sites were covered. See Table 1 below:

Table 1: Distribution of Sample of Community Members by Sub-County/Project and Parishes

| Sub-County | Parish | % | N |
|---------------|--------------|------|----|
| Nakawa/CEEWA | Banda | 6.4 | 5 |
| | Bugolobi | 6.4 | 5 |
| | Bukoto | 6.4 | 5 |
| Nabweru/CEEWA | Kazo/Nabweru | 6.4 | 5 |
| | Manganjo | 6.4 | 5 |
| | Nansana | 5.1 | 4 |
| Buwama/CEEWA | Mbizzinya | 7.7 | 6 |
| | Jalamba | 5.1 | 4 |
| | Katebo | 3.8 | 3 |
| Rubaya/AHI | Karujanga | 12.8 | 10 |
| | Kibuga | 16.7 | 13 |
| | Rwanyena | 16.7 | 13 |

| | | | |
|--------------|--|--------------|-----------|
| Total | | 100.0 | 78 |
|--------------|--|--------------|-----------|

Selecting of the respondents was purposive for CEEWA – Acacia project, for the project is targeting only 10 clients per parish. These were deemed to possess knowledge regarding the Acacia ICT project. It had been planned to cover 50% of CEEWA clients, but this could not be realised due to failure of locating some of the women entrepreneurs.

Selection of respondents from the community in Rubaya posed tremendous difficulties due to the fact that ordinary community members were yet to be exposed to the project. It was therefore decided that purposive sampling of respondents be adopted and in given trading centres, where at least a few individuals could respond to ICT related questions. Three parishes in Rubaya Sub-county were covered where 36 community members were interviewed.

Besides community members/individuals in the project areas, other study participants included in this evaluation were:

Project Managers of CEEWA and AHI – Acacia Projects
Telecentre Managers of Buwama and Nabweru,
Community Representatives
District Officials
AHI Technical Committee
AHI Local Management Committee
AHI, Community Agents
NARO officials
CARE staff.

2.4.2 Data Collection

Data were mainly collected through personal interviewing using different sets of questionnaires for each of the above categories. The draft questionnaires were discussed during the methodological workshops, and later finalised to incorporate all issues that were raised by workshop participants. Below are details of categories of respondents and instruments that were used.

Interviews with Individuals: A structured questionnaire covering the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents, ICTs knowledge and usage, appreciation and relevance of ICTs was administered to 78 respondents in the two sites by the Research Assistants. Given the status of the Projects, most of the questions in the questionnaire were not applicable.

Project Managers: Although the Project Manager of CEEWA answered almost a half of the questions in the questionnaire, the AHI – Kabale Project Manager could hardly answer all the questions as the Project was yet to take off.

Community Representatives: Local officials at the various levels of administration in the two sites were interviewed using a semi-structured questionnaire. The instrument sought information on the characteristics of the community, information and communication needs of the community, participation of the community in the process of the introduction of ICTs, the relevance and appreciation of ICTs and community response to the introduction of ICTs

Community Organisations: A few organisations mainly CBOs in the area were approached, and interviews conducted with officials. An instrument that sought information on the type of the organisation, information and communication needs was administered.

Dissemination and Validation Workshop: This took place after the draft report had been completed. The workshop which, was attended by key stakeholders was vital in the sense that study results were presented, and feedback obtained. Thus, this report is an outcome of data collected in the field and feedback received during the workshop.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

All filled individual questionnaires were edited and coded by the Research Assistants. These were entered into the computer using an EPI-INFO package. Frequencies were run to provide a descriptive picture, while cross-tabulations were generated to assess any relationship between project and other relevant variables.

Content and thematic analysis was adopted for all qualitative information generated through key informant interviews and focus group discussions. Salient quotations have been utilised in the text to supplement and corroborate quantitative information generated through individual questionnaires.

Problems Encountered

The study was successfully carried out in terms of reaching the two sites and collecting data. However, the major limitation was the timeliness of the evaluation. Both Projects, although more than a year running, had barely taken off so as to meaningfully assess the process of ICTs introduction and changes that might accrue from ICTs usage and application. In the circumstances, it became rather complex to document the successes and failures of the two projects. Nonetheless, it was deemed important at this stage to continue with the evaluation in light of the fact that there are traditional ICTs that have always been used such as telephone, radio etc., and also to gauge peoples anticipated response to ICTs. It has to be reiterated that one of the major problems encountered in this evaluation was the inapplicability of the questions or evaluation issues that were being raised. Earlier on it was indicated that the Project Manager of AHI Acacia Project could hardly answer any of the questions apart from identification ones. On the other hand, the Manager of CEEWA could only answer a few of the evaluation questions. Indeed the individual questionnaire could have totally redundant had the evaluation team restricted itself on modern ICTs.

Further, the sample size for the quantitative aspect of this study was not large to the extent that a few respondents in given categories appear either as big percentages or small. For the case of CEEWA, a few small women entrepreneurs are targeted. However, not all the CEEWA targeted beneficiaries could be located by the research team as they would be away attending to some their businesses in places that were difficult to trace. In the case of AHI, only community members mainly in the trading centres who had some knowledge on ICTs were purposely selected.

It has to be noted that a study of this nature would have benefited from analysis of data by gender. This was not possible given the fact that all CEEWA – Acacia Project beneficiaries are women. Thus, analysing data by gender could only have been possible in the case of AHI-Kabale. However, the sample for the AHI – Kabale Acacia Project was very small, but with majority respondents being men. Even then, the responses provided by both men and women were generally similar as the project had not fully taken off. It would be interesting in future once the Project has been implemented to analyse possible differences and similarities

between men and women.

Despite the above problems encountered during the evaluation, the results still offer an indicative picture of people's awareness, knowledge, appreciation and possible value of ICTs. Further, the barriers that would inhibit people from using modern ICTs emerge in this evaluation, and possible measures to address the barriers. Finally, irrespective of the problems encountered, pertinent lessons have been documented in this evaluation.

THE CONTEXT OF ACACIA PROJECTS

3.1 The Geographical/Physical Location

This evaluation was delimited to community-based development projects of AHI located in Kabale in South Western Uganda, and CEEWA – Acacia Project targeting small women entrepreneurs in the districts of Kampala, Mpigi and Wakiso. At the time this project was approved it covered two districts; Kampala and Mpigi. But recently, Wakiso was carved out of Mpigi as a new district.

Kabale district is located about 500 kms from the capital city Kampala. Majority of the population in Kabale (over 95%) are peasant farmers, whose major economic activity is crop farming. Crops are grown on a small scale using traditional methods of farming.

The AHI – Acacia project will be implemented in Rubaya Sub-county with Kabale Municipality serving as the location of the hub Telecentre. Kabale Municipality covers approximately 80 square kilometres with an estimated population of 50,000. On the other hand, Rubaya Sub-county headquarters, which will be the location of the satellite Acacia Telecentre Access Point is located close to the Rwanda-Uganda border. The Sub County comprises of 8 parishes, which will benefit from the ICTs project. These are Bigaga, Kahunje, Mugandu, Buramba, Kibuga, Karuzanga, Bwanyana and Kitooma. The Sub-county has an acreage of 114 square kilometres, and an estimated population of 46, 800.

With regard to CEEWA- Acacia project area, it is spread over 3 districts of Kampala, Wakiso and Mpigi. Wakiso and Mpigi are close to the capital city. The farthest beneficiaries, who are in Mpigi district will be served by Buwama Multipurpose Community Telecentre (MCT). Buwama Sub-county is located about 65 kms on the Kampala-Masaka highway. Although CEEWA – Acacia projects targets small women entrepreneurs, majority of the population around the 2 telecentres of Nabweru and Buwama are peasant farmers. However, unlike in Kabale there is a substantial number of small traders in the project area.

3.2 Socio-cultural and Political Environment

In this sub-section, the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents to whom the individual questionnaire was administered are presented. This is meant to provide an appreciation of the study findings. Relevant issues in connection with the political environment vis-à-vis ICTs are also discussed.

In Table 2 below the socio-demographic characteristics of 78 community members in both projects are presented.

Table 2: Sample of Basics Characteristics of Community Members

| Basic Characteristics N = 78 | % | n |
|-------------------------------------|----------|----------|
| Age | | |
| <18 | 1.3 | 1 |
| 18 – 30 | 25.6 | 20 |
| 31 – 43 | 50.0 | 39 |
| 44 – 56 | 15.4 | 12 |
| 57+ | 7.7 | 6 |
| Sex | | |
| Male | 38.5 | 30 |
| Female | 61.6 | 48 |
| Marital Status | | |
| Married | 69.2 | 54 |
| Single | 15.4 | 12 |
| Divorced | 2.6 | 2 |
| Widow(er) | 10.3 | 8 |
| Cohabiting | 1.3 | 1 |
| Separated | 1.3 | 1 |
| Highest Level of Education | | |
| Primary | 43.6 | 34 |
| Secondary | 41.0 | 32 |
| University | 15.4 | 12 |
| Principal Occupation | | |
| Education | 12.8 | 10 |
| Health | 3.8 | 3 |
| Agriculture | 46.2 | 36 |
| Trade | 35.9 | 28 |
| Fishing | 1.3 | 1 |
| Crafts | 6.4 | 5 |
| Breeding | 1.3 | 1 |
| Construction | 0.0 | 0 |
| Industry* | 2.6 | 2 |

****Brewing local alcohol***

As the above Table shows, most respondents were middle-aged (31-43 years old) and married. Given the fact that CEEWA targets women, the representation of women in the sample was higher than that of men. The only men interviewed were in Kabale i.e., potential beneficiaries of AHI – Acacia Project. Of practical relevance to ICTs, is that all respondents who were met had attained some level of education, but with majority having attained some primary education. By locality/sites, majority of respondents with primary education were in the AHI – Acacia Project area, Rubaya Sub-county as shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Respondents Highest Level of Education by Locality

| Sub-County | Parish | Education | | |
|---------------|--------------|-----------|-------------|--------------|
| | | Primary % | Secondary % | University % |
| Nakawa/CEEWA | Banda | 40.0 | 60.0 | 0.0 |
| | Bugolobi | 100.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| | Bukoto | 20.0 | 60.0 | 20.0 |
| Nabweru/CEEWA | Kazo/Nabweru | 20.0 | 80.0 | 0.0 |
| | Manganjo | 40.0 | 20.0 | 40.0 |
| | Nansana | 25.0 | 75 | 0.0 |
| Buwama/CEEWA | Mbizzinya | 16.7 | 83.3 | 0.0 |
| | Jalamba | 0.0 | 75.0 | 25.0 |
| | Katebo | 0.0 | 66.7 | 33.3 |
| Rubaya/AHI | Karujanga | 60.0 | 20.0 | 20.0 |
| | Kibuga | 61.5 | 30.8 | 7.7 |
| | Rwanyena | 53.8 | 15.4 | 30.8 |

We note in the above Table that a few respondents in the CEEWA project area had attained University education with majority having attained secondary education. The implication here is that dissemination of information will have to be influenced by dominant levels of education of majority of beneficiaries in a given locality. The most important factor, however, is one's ability to read and write in given languages.

Majority respondents affirmed that they could read and write in their local languages especially Luganda (in case of CEEWA) and Rukiga (in case of AHI). A big proportion of respondents (65.4%) reported that they could read and write English. See Table 4 below.

Table 4: Community Members' Ability to Read and Write

| Read and Write | Language | | | | | | | |
|----------------|------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|------------|-------------|----------------------------|-------------|
| | French | | English | | Arabic | | Others – Luganda/Rukiga | |
| | Yes % | No % | Yes % | No % | Yes % | No % | Yes % | No % |
| Read | 1.3 | 98.7 | 65.4 | 34.6 | 1.3 | 98.7 | 88.5 | 11.5 |
| Write | 1.3 | 98.7 | 65.4 | 34.6 | 1.3 | 98.7 | 88.5 | 11.5 |

Languages such as French and Arabic which, appeared in the individual questionnaire were unknown except for a single respondent who indicated that he knew French and Arabic. Thus information which will be meaningful to beneficiaries has got to be packaged in the local languages and English. When ability to read and write were cross-tabulated with locality, surprisingly, it was only in Bugolobi Parish in Kampala where all the CEEWA clients/ women entrepreneurs indicated that they could neither read nor write in English. In the AHI Project area, Rwanyena Parish had the biggest proportion of respondents who indicated that they could not read nor write in English (69.2%). See Table 5 for details.

Table 5: Ability to Read and Write English by Locality

| Sub-County | Parish | Ability to Read and Write | |
|----------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|--------------|
| | | Read % | Write % |
| Nakawa/CEEWA | Banda | 70.0 | 80.0 |
| | Bugolobi | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| | Bukoto | 80.0 | 80.0 |
| Nabweru/CEEWA | Kazo/Nabweru | 80.0 | 80.0 |
| | Manganjo | 40.0 | 40.0 |
| | Nansana | 75.0 | 75.0 |
| Buwama/CEEWA | Mbizzinya | 100.0 | 100.0 |
| | Jalamba | 100.0 | 100.0 |
| | Katebo | 100.0 | 100.0 |

| | | | |
|----------------|------------------|-------------|-------------|
| ¹ 1 | Karujanga | 70.0 | 70.0 |
| | Kibuga | 76.9 | 76.9 |
| | Rwanyena | 30.8 | 30.8 |

On the local languages such as Luganda in the Project area of CEEWA and Rukiga in the project area of AHI, majority respondents were in position to read and write. There were, however, a few respondents who could neither read nor write in their local languages in Karujanga (20.0%), Kibuga (30.8%), Rwanyena (15.4%) in Kabale and 20% in Maganjo, Kampala. As expected, majority of the illiterate were in the rural areas of AHI Project area in Kabale whose principal occupation was agriculture. See Table 6 below.

Table 6: Respondents Principal Occupation by Locality

| Sub-County | Parish | Occupation | | | | | | | |
|---------------|--------------|------------|-------------|-------------|------------|--------------|-------------|---------------|------------------------|
| | | Educ % | Health % | Agric. % | Trade % | Fishery % | Crafts % | Breeding % | Construc- tion % |
| Nakawa/CEEWA | Banda | 0.0 | 20.1 | 0.0 | 80.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| | Bugolobi | 0.0 | 0.0 | 20.0 | 60.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| | Bukoto | 0.0 | 20.1 | 0.0 | 60.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Nabweru/CEEWA | Kazo/Nabweru | 0.0 | 20.0 | 0.0 | 80.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| | Manganjo | 0.0 | 0.0 | 40.0 | 80.0 | 0.0 | 20.0 | 20.0 | 0.0 |
| | Nansana | 0.0 | 0.0 | 25.0 | 75.0- | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Buwama/CEEWA | Mbizzinya | 16.7 | 0.0 | 33.3 | 16.7 | 16.7 | 16.7 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| | Jalamba | 25.0 | 0.0 | 50.0 | 25.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| | Katebo | 33.3 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 33.3 | 0.0 | 33.3 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Rubaya/AHI | Karujanga | 25.0 | 0.0 | 60.0 | 20.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 10.0 |
| | Kibuga | 30.8 | 0.0 | 69.2 | 7.7 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| | Rwanyena | 0.0 | 0.0 | 100.0 | 7.7 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |

¹ *o read and write might not be representative of rural Kabale due to purposive sampling of respondents*

The principal occupation of respondents largely implies the type of information that one would wish to access through ICTs. Agriculture emerged out as a principal occupation for most of the respondents (46.2%), followed by trade (35.9%). In terms of locality, agriculture as expected was dominant in the AHI Project area and Buwama in the CEEWA Project area. In the rest of the CEEWA Project, trade emerged as the dominant occupation for the respondents. Most of the information needs accordingly would rotate around agriculture and trade rather than such occupations as health, education, fishery, crafts, breeding and construction.

The above socio-demographic and cultural characteristics indicate a favourable environment in which ICTs can be introduced and be utilised. This environment is located equally in a favourable/conducive political environment. Through the policy of decentralization in Uganda local authorities are mandated to plan and deliver services to their people. Local authorities are more than willing to give a chance and fully participate in the implementation of development projects.

3.3 ICTs Environment

In Uganda today, there is no doubt that the technological environment with regard to information and communication has been steadily growing. This has been due to global changes and advancement of information technologies, but also significantly due to the liberalization policy in the communication sector, which has attracted private investment. To-date, Uganda boasts of over 20 private F.M radio stations, all of which having gone on air since the mid 1990s. Majority of the F.M radio stations are picked in Kampala and the surrounding areas, and other large urban centres such as Mbarara, Gulu, Kabale and Soroti.

According to the World Bank (1999/2000) there were 126 radio receivers per 1000 persons in 1996. With the opening up of several FM stations, the number of radio receivers has definitely increased. The limitation of F.M radio stations is that they coverage is limited. On the other hand, the National radio, Radio Uganda, theoretically covers the entire country, but with poor receivership. According to Achia (2000), the current coverage of radio Uganda is about 50% of the country. Whereas the radio covers about 50% of the country, other communication channels such as the television covers less.

With regard to telephone services, at least all major urban centres in the country have telephone network, covered by Uganda Telecom Limited (UTL). According to Kibombo and Kayambwe (2000) by the end of 1997, Uganda Posts and Telecommunications, which was the only telephone national operator at the time had only 50,829 subscribers. This number as Achia (2000) notes has remarkably increased, especially with the coming on the market of 3 mobile cellular phone providers in the country; Celtel, MTN Uganda and Mango, which is subsidiary of UTL. By July 2000, there were over 60,000 fix-line telephone subscribers, and 122,000 mobile phone subscribers. According to Achia (2000), the telephone density is approximately 0.95 per 100 people, roughly a 300% increase over the last 4 years.

Although the telephone coverage and users are steadily increasing, the usage and users of modern ICTs such as Internet, e-mail services etc., are yet to pick up. As Achia (2000) observes, the Internet and E-mail services in Uganda had a late start, with the first networking connections being established during the Great Lake crisis. To-date, there are over ten Internet Service Providers (ISPs) for a total of over 10,000 users. At the same time, there are numerous users of Internet cafes in Kampala and some urban centres in the country.

The few current television stations (about 6) are all based in Kampala, and all, save for Uganda Television, operate in and around Kampala. According to the World Bank (1999/2000), there were 26 television sets per 1000 people in 1997

3.4 Projects Profile, Achievement and Major Activities

3.4.1 Economic Empowerment of Women through ICTs in Uganda

CEEWA ICTs – Acacia Project was designed to establish an ICT infrastructure referred to as “Women Information Resources and Electronic Service” (WIRES) in Kampala. This is supposed to be connected to two rural sites/telecentres in Nabweru and Buwama Sub-counties. Despite the fact that the Project was approved over a year ago, it is still in its infancy of implementation. At the time of this evaluation, the following activities had been accomplished, which nevertheless, cannot mean that the project had already had meaningful impact on women entrepreneurs nor successes and failures to be evaluated.

Preliminary visits to the two sites and consultative meetings with potential beneficiaries were carried out. CEEWA is expected to test and demonstrate the use of repackaged information to women entrepreneurs and impart skills.

A baseline survey (Kibombo and Kayabwe, October 2000) was completed, among others, to identify information and communication needs in trade and commerce and establish levels of awareness and practice among women entrepreneurs and women organisations about ICTs. As it can be seen, the baseline was carried out in October, while this evaluation was commissioned in November 2000, barely before the project had really taken off.

Possibly the most important accomplished step of recent has been acquisition of premises for the Women’s Information and Resource Electronic Services, procurement and installation of equipment. At the time of this study the computers were internally networked, and were yet to be connected to Buwama and Nabweru Multipurpose Community Telecentres.

The process of developing materials, sensitisation/training of women entrepreneurs on what ICTs are, their usage and application, and potential benefits are the latest activities. At the time data were collected, the training of women entrepreneurs had not started.

CEEWA is headed by the Project Leader who at the same time is the Chairperson, CEEWA-Uganda Chapter. The ICT Project is co-ordinated by the Project Manager who is assisted by two Assistant Information Officers. A Technical Assistant was to be recruited to help in the maintenance and management of WIRES (Women’s Information Resource and Electronic Service).

3.4.2 AHI – Acacia Project, Kabale.

The African Highlands Eco-Regional Program, Acacia Project, although approved more earlier than the CEEWA – Acacia Project had not taken off in terms of equipment installation at the time of this evaluation. This project was approved in 1998 with ICRAF as an implementing agency. The responsible officer at ICRAF resigned before the project had taken off. As a result, the implementation role was entrusted to AHI. In July 1999, the Project Manager was recruited to oversee the implementation. The Project aims at encouraging the sustainable use of natural resources in food production by testing the application of ICTs and other communication approaches. Unlike CEEWA, AHI – ICTs Project is not working through existing sites. The pilot project is to be carried out using one Telecentre hub located in Kabale town, and one satellite Telecentre Access Point (TAP) in Rubaya Sub-county.

Kabale town which, is the location of the telecentre hub is supplied with hydroelectric power. In terms of communication, Kabale town has telephone coverage by Uganda Telecom Ltd., originally owned by government, but which has been privatized. Kabale town is also connected on MTN cellular network. At the time of this study, a spacious building which, was donated by Kabale District Council as part of its contribution to house the Project had been repaired/renovated at the Project cost. Although the necessary equipment had been procured, this was yet to be installed. During fieldwork, there were indications that the project would be launched in February 2001. However, during the dissemination and validation workshop, it was reported that the launching of the project was set for May 2001. Once the launching is done and the equipment installed, the Kabale hub is expected to provide ICT services to Rubaya satellite, wireless telephone link to Government and NGOs, e-mail services, internet, telephone and computer training services.

With regard to Rubaya site, the Local Council III of Rubaya Sub-county donated a building to house the satellite telecentre as part of its contribution. At the time of this study, the building had been renovated and a certificate of completion had been issued. In Rubaya there is no electricity or mains supply. No telephone services are available, but MTN cellular network signal can be picked on nearby adjacent hill.

Due to lack of phone services, connectivity on MTN GSM signal is to be ensured by employing a high gain antenna mounted on a locally fabricated mast connecting to an Amper Licea unit that will enable using voice telephone, fax, e-mail and internet services.

To-date, the following is the progress of the Project:

Relevant structures to assist in the implementation of the project have been formed, and are in place. These include the District Steering Committee comprising of representatives of Acacia Secretariat, NARO, Project Leader, District Administration and the Private Sector. Other structures include the Local Management Committees for Rubaya site and Kabale site to oversee and monitor activities of the telecentres, Parish Development Committees, and selection of Community Agents.

A baseline survey is yet to be completed.

Donation of building at two sites by respective local authorities.

Possibly, in line with project activities in the field, consensus-building workshops have been carried out in Rubaya and Kabale to sensitise mainly civic leaders on the relevance of ICTs for rural and agricultural development.

THE EVALUATION FINDINGS

4.1 Major Evaluation Issues

As indicated in the preceding sections, this evaluation was carried out at the time when the two projects were yet to have the ICT equipment installed and used by the intended beneficiaries. The status of the projects could not allow rigorous application of the evaluation questions as they were premature, especially with regard to modern ICTs. It was due to this plausible difficulty that certain assumptions had to be made in order to continue with the evaluation. It was assumed that some intended beneficiaries had been exposed to ICTs not necessarily by CEEWA or AHI. Thus respondents were assumed that apart from modern ICTs, they were aware or had been exposed to traditional ICTs such as telephone, fax, radio etc. Coupled with the above, a strategy of explaining in detail to beneficiaries about modern ICTs was adopted so as to enable gauging what would be the response towards modern ICTs.

Guided by the above, attempts were in the framework of the evaluation to examine the following ICTs related issues:

- Application, content and relevance
- Technology
- Community participation
- Community response

4.1.1 Application, Content and Relevance

To examining issues of application, content and relevance of ICTs, attempts were made to assess the level of awareness and knowledge of ICTs, sources of information on ICTs, usage of ICTs, types of ICTs/services used, purposes of ICTs and possible changes (real and anticipated) that could have accrued from the usage of ICTs irrespective of the type.

4.1.1.1 Awareness and Knowledge of ICTs

From both key informant interviews and individual interviews, awareness of modern ICTs was found to be low and limited. However, most women in the CEEWA-Project, Kampala were more aware of the ICTs especially the telephone compared to respondents in AHI-Project area. The computer and its associated services were in general still regarded as sophisticated, expensive and a preserve of the rich elite. Modern ICTs sounded a remote and strange idea to most respondents as one of them succinctly summarized:

These questions to me with my small business do not mean anything...those sophisticated machines ["Byuma bikalimagezi"] are not meant for us. What will these ICTs help me. May be for the educated ones with their big businesses.

The above response generally reflected the view of most in the 2 Project areas. Lack of awareness and value of ICTs with regard to how people can improve their wellbeing through ICTs, make them perceive ICTs as "foreign" ideas meant to benefit the elite and the rich.

4.1.1.2 Sources of Information on ICTs

Various sources of information on ICTs during the last 3 years preceding this study were enumerated by respondents in the 2 Project areas. Majority of respondents (69.2%) indicated the radio as their source of information. See Table 7.

Table 7: Source of Information on ICTs during the last 3 Years

| Sources* | Response | N |
|----------------|----------|----|
| Radio | 69.2 | 54 |
| TV | 23.1 | 18 |
| Newspapers | 20.5 | 16 |
| Project | 12.8 | 10 |
| NGO | 24.4 | 19 |
| Acacia Project | 23.1 | 18 |
| Others | 17.9 | 14 |

**Multiple Responses Allowed*

With regard to Acacia Project as a source of ICTs information, slightly over a fifth of all the respondents indicated it. The figure could possibly have been higher, but respondents who indicated NGO were mainly referring to CEEWA, an Acacia Project. Most of the respondents who indicated Acacia were in CEEWA Project area where some sensitisation of women entrepreneurs on ICTs was in its early stages, and also near the telecentres of Buwama and Nabweru. In AHI – Project area, a few who reported Acacia project were mainly local officials who had been closely associated with the project. See Table 8 for sources of ICTs information by locality/site.

Table 8: Respondents Sources of Information on ICTs during the Last 3 Years by Locality

| Sub-County | Parish | Sources of Information on ICTs | | | | | | |
|---------------|--------------|--------------------------------|-------|--------------|-----------|-------|------------------|----------|
| | | Radio % | TV % | News-paper % | Project % | NGO % | Acacia Project % | Others % |
| Nakawa/CEEWA | Banda | 0.0 | 20.0 | 20.0 | 0.0 | 80.0 | 0.0 | 20.0 |
| | Bugolobi | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 100.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| | Bukoto | 20.0 | 20.0 | 40.0 | 20.0 | 80.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Nabweru/CEEWA | Kazo/Nabweru | 60.0 | 40.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 100.0 | 0.0 |
| | Manganjo | 100.0 | 100.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 80.0 | 20.0 |
| | Nansana | 75.0 | 25.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 50.0 | 0.0 |
| Buwama/CEEWA | Mbizzinya | 100.0 | 83.3 | 16.7 | 33.0 | 33.0 | 33.3 | 0.0 |
| | Jalamba | 100.0 | 25.0 | 25.0 | 25.0 | 0.0 | 50.0 | 0.0 |
| | Katebo | 100.0 | 66.7 | 100.0 | 33.3 | 33.3 | 66.7 | 0.0 |
| Rubaya/AHI | Karujanga | 60.0 | 0.0 | 30.0 | 10.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 30.0 |
| | Kibuga | 92.3 | 0.0 | 38.5 | 15.4 | 23.1 | 7.7 | 38.5 |
| | Rwanyena | 84.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 15.4 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |

With exception of Nakawa in Kampala, radio as a source of information on ICTs was the most dominant. We note that Acacia Project as a source of information on ICTs was mainly reported by women in Nabweru and Buwama, each with a multipurpose community telecentre. Newspapers, which were reported as sources of information, were mainly those written in local languages such as “Bukedde” in Luganda and “Orumuri and Entasi” in Runyankole/Rukiga.

4.1.1.3 ICTs Usage and Application

Usage and application of modern ICTs was extremely low as expected given the status of the two projects. However, majority respondents as shown in Table 9 had used ICTs, but mainly telephone services.

Table 9: Used ICTs after Receipt of Information

| Used ICTs | % | n |
|--------------|--------------|-----------|
| Yes | 58.4 | 45 |
| No | 41.6 | 32 |
| Total | 100.0 | 77 |

By site or Project area, many more respondents in the CEEWA Project area had used ICTs, mainly telephone services more than those in AHI-Project area, Kabale. See Table 10 below.

Table 10: Respondents Who Reported Having Used ICTs by Locality

| Sub-County | Parish | Yes % | No % |
|----------------------|---------------------|---------------|-------------|
| Nakawa/CEEWA | Banda | 60.0 | 40.0 |
| | Bugolobi | 50.0 | 50.0 |
| | Bukoto | 80.0 | 20.0 |
| Nabweru/CEEWA | Kazo/Nabweru | 100.0 | 0.0 |
| | Manganjo | 80.0 | 0.0 |
| | Nansana | 75.0 | 25.0 |
| Buwama/CEEWA | Mbizzinya | 66.7 | 33.3 |
| | Jalamba | 25.0 | 75.0 |
| | Katebo | 100.00 | 0.0 |
| Rubaya/AHI | Karujanga | 70.0 | 0.0 |
| | Kibuga | 46.2 | 53.8 |
| | Rwanyena | 23.1 | 76.9 |

What can be noted in the above Table is that in some of the Parishes such as Kazo/Nabweru and Katebo located near the two telecentres of Nabweru and Buwama respectively, all women entrepreneurs had used

ICTs. This, would imply that if ICT services were to be available, and people sensitized/trained about their use, majority could utilize them. This is more evident in the fact that majority respondents who had ever used ICTs reported using them during the year 2000 when the two telecentres of Nabweru and Buwama were in operation. See Table 11 below.

Table 11: First Date of ICT Usage

| Reasons | % | N |
|--------------|--------------|-----------|
| Before 1998 | 35.6 | 16 |
| 1999 | 20.0 | 9 |
| 2000 | 44.4 | 20 |
| Total | 100.0 | 45 |

4.1.1.4 Types of ICTs/Services Used

Telephone was the most used ICT by majority of people (50.4%). As shown in Table 12, the rest of the ICTs were not commonly used.

Table 12: Types of ICTs/Services Used

| Reasons | % | n |
|-----------------|------|----|
| Telephone | 50.4 | 44 |
| Fax | 5.1 | 4 |
| Surfing the Net | 0.0 | 0 |
| Word Processing | 9.0 | 7 |
| E-mail | 6.4 | 5 |
| Others* | 14.1 | 11 |

Surfing the net and e-mail use remained limited. With word processing, there were reports of people willing to take up computer lessons so as to join the “modern world”. Faxing was mainly done by business people. In Table 13, majority of the CEEWA project intended beneficiaries had used telephone services except for women in Jalamba, which is typical rural.

Table 13: Type of ICTs/services Used by Respondents by Site/Locality

| Sub-County | Parish | ICTs/Services | | | | | |
|--------------|----------|---------------------|----------|-------------------------|--------------------------|-------------|--------------|
| | | Tele- phone % | Fax % | Surfing the Net % | Word Process-ing % | E-Mail % | *Others % |
| Nakawa/CEEWA | Banda | 60.0 | 40.0 | 0.0 | 20.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| | Bugolobi | 60.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 20.0 |

| | | | | | | | |
|----------------------|---------------------|--------------|-------------|------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| | Bukoto | 80.0 | 20.0 | 0.0 | 20.0 | 40.0 | 20.0 |
| Nabweru/CEEWA | Kazo/Nabweru | 100.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 60.0 | 0.0 | 40.0 |
| | Manganjo | 80.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 20.0 |
| | Nansana | 75.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 25.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Buwama/CEEWA | Mbizzinya | 66.7 | 16.7 | 0.0 | 16.7 | 16.7 | 16.7 |
| | Jalamba | 25.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 25.0 | 0.0 |
| | Katebo | 66.7 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 33.3 | 66.7 |
| Rubaya/AHI | Karujanga | 70.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 30.0 |
| | Kibuga | 38.5 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 7.7 |
| | Rwanyena | 23.1 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |

*** Basically meant photocopying.**

It has to be noted, however, that the two projects (CEEWA-ICT and AHI) are yet to launch and extend ICT facilities to the community. Thus, the current ICTs used such as telephone were either individual phones, or provided by private providers or existing telecentres. This again, explains the frequency of ICTs usage whereby majority indicated that they used ICTs sometimes.

Table 14: Frequency of ICTs/ICT Services by Locality

| Sub-County | Parish | Frequency | | | |
|----------------------|---------------------|------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------|------------------------------|
| | | Every-day % | Every Week % | Never % | Some- times % |
| Nakawa/CEEWA | Banda | 33.3 | 0.0 | 33.3 | 33.3 |
| | Bugolobi | 0.0 | 0.0 | 66.7 | 33.3 |
| | Bukoto | 50.0 | 25.0 | 0.0 | 25.0 |
| Nabweru/CEEWA | Kazo/Nabweru | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 100.0 |
| | Manganjo | 0.0 | 50.0 | 0.0 | 50.0 |
| | Nansana | 0.0 | 66.7 | 0.0 | 33.3 |
| Buwama/CEEWA | Mbizzinya | 50.0 | 25.0 | 0.0 | 25.0 |
| | Jalamba | 100.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| | Katebo | 0.0 | 66.7 | 0.0 | 33.3 |
| Rubaya/AHI | Karujanga | 0.0 | 14.3 | 0.0 | 85.7 |
| | Kibuga | 0.0 | 16.7 | 0.0 | 83.3 |
| | Rwanyena | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 100.0 |

4.1.1.5 Purposes of ICTs

In all the sites, majority people who had ever used ICTs reported using them for contacting family members more than any other purpose. Indeed, majority respondents (96.2%; n = 75) affirmed that they had members living outside their own villages or town who they find cheaper to telephone rather than physically visiting them. See Table 15 for the various purposes for which ICTs are used.

Table 15: Reported Purposes of ICTs Use by Locality

| Sub-County | Parish | Purpose | | | | | | | |
|---------------|--------------|------------|--------------------------|---------------------|-------------------|-----------------|------------------|-----------------|----------|
| | | For work % | Contact family members % | Commercial/ Trade % | Research/ Educ. % | Agric. Inform % | Health Inform. % | Entertainment % | Others % |
| Nakawa/CEEWA | Banda | 0.0 | 60.0 | 20.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| | Bugolobi | 20.0 | 60.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| | Bukoto | 60.0 | 80.0 | 20.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Nabweru/CEEWA | Kazo/Nabweru | 60.0 | 80.0 | 40.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 20.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| | Manganjo | 0.0 | 40.0 | 20.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| | Nansana | 0.0 | 50.0 | 50.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Buwama/CEEWA | Mbizzinya | 50.0 | 50.0 | 16.7 | 16.7 | 16.7 | 16.7 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| | Jalamba | 25.0 | 25.0 | 0.0 | 25.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| | Katebo | 66.7 | 100.0 | 33.3 | 33.3 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Rubaya/AHI | Karujanga | 50.0 | 70.0 | 10.0 | 20.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 10.0 |
| | Kibuga | 23.1 | 30.8 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| | Rwanyena | 7.7 | 15.4 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Average | | 28.2 | 48.7 | 12.8 | 6.4 | 1.3 | 2.6 | 3.8 | 2.6 |

Next to contacting family members, a big proportion of respondents in the CEEWA Project area indicated that they had used ICTs in their work followed by trade and commerce. The rest of the purposes such as research/education, agricultural information, health information etc., ICTs had not been used.

4.1.1.6 Reasons for the low usage of ICTs

With regard to modern ICTs, reasons for failure to use them rotated around inaccessibility/non-availability, and generally lack of awareness and knowledge about them. It can be hoped that once the 2 projects have taken off, people might embrace them. In any case, community representatives especially in Rubaya who had already been introduced to the purposes of the project were eagerly looking forward for the starting of the project.

With respect to other ICTs such as telephone, people in Rubaya and Buwama gave varying reasons for their low use, but mainly lack of availability of the service. Other reasons included high costs involved, lack of interest or need and general lack of knowledge and skills.

4.1.1.7 Relevance of ICTs

Of the 39 respondents who had ever used some form of ICTs, 43.6% noted that ICTs were very useful, while the same proportion were not sure or did not know whether they were useful at all. See Table 16.

Table 16: Usefulness and Relevance of the Contents of the ICTs Used

| Usefulness | % | N |
|---------------------|--------------|-----------|
| Very Useful | 43.6 | 17 |
| Fairly Useful | 7.7 | 3 |
| Not Useful | 5.1 | 2 |
| Not sure/Don't Know | 43.6 | 17 |
| Total | 100.0 | 39 |

A key informant noted in the following words that relevance of modern ICTs and appreciation might not spontaneously come out:

ICTs are still a mystery to most of our people...our people do not understand such things as computer, Internet, e-mail and other modern information facilities. This could be attributed to low levels of awareness, lack of availability, but also the secondary importance attached to information needs than other pressing problems which people face such as poverty, health care, education for children, marketing of agricultural products etc.[District Key Informant, Kabale]

Not only ordinary community members were reported to be attaching secondary importance to information, but also some community representatives especially those who had not been sensitized about the Project. Indeed, community representatives in the CEEWA project area echoed the remarks of the above key informant that communities had more pressing problems than ICTs such as how to generate incomes, health care, education of their children and general survival amidst repressive poverty.

Despite the above problems, inherent potential to make community representatives and ordinary community members appreciate the relevance of ICTs was evident especially in the AHI-Acacia Project. The Director of Production and Marketing on LC.V in Kabale regarding the relevance of ICTs noted the following:

Our farmers face a lot of agricultural problems. Information is a key to addressing some of the problems and consequently information is a key to development. An ICT project is a worthwhile project if it can live to the expectations and information needs of our farmers. Information is a key input into agricultural modernisation.

The appreciation and relevance of ICTs by Kabale District Council was demonstrated by donating a building to house the Kabale site. District officials also serve on the District Steering Committee, which is a policy advisory body.

Rubaya LC III Council/Sub-county similarly donated a building as part of its contribution towards the Project. Indeed, the Chairman, Rubaya LC III noted the following:

The way I understand this project, it will be very helpful to our people especially if it helps people meet some of their basic needs. The community is happy about the project and are ready to co-operate especially if the project will help them to get information on markets for their agricultural products such as cabbage, Irish potatoes, carrots etc. Health information on how people can fight against malaria will also be very important for our people.

Besides providing information, the Project was being looked at as a form of employment and providing skills, and hence relevant to the needs of the people as one informant put it:

We are told the project will bring computers ... our young people will be trained, and be able to compete favourably for jobs that demand one to be computer literate. We are told there will be a library. This will be a vital facility for our school going children.

In Rubaya, Community agents who were met in a focus group discussion (FGD) also noted the anticipated relevance of the project:

In each parish, we are 2 Community Agents. We received awareness sessions about the Project by the staff. We were promised to be trained first in ICTs and their different applications before the services are brought to the community. We have been waiting, but we believe that the moment the Project brings these ICTs, farmers will obtain necessary information to increase their output and market it. The Telecentre will also help the students and teachers to obtain educational material from the Internet and for word processing by schools and social functions like wedding cards etc. But for all this to happen, there will be urgent need to make the community more aware and interested through sensitization, and also provide tangible products such pesticides and high yielding seeds to accompany ICTs seminars.

District Officials were of the view that once the project is successful in the designated areas, then the experience can be replicated in other parts of Kabale not covered by the project. One of the key informants at the District was particularly impressed in the component of research as explained:

The idea of collecting empirical data by the project is very useful. Once the data are analysed and reports written, these will feed into our District Development Plan, reflecting the situation on the ground.

On the part of ordinary community members, the AHI – Acacia Project was being viewed as a source of agricultural services such as improved seeds, pesticides/chemicals and a channel that can help them market their products at favourable prices. Their conception could be linked to the fact that according to the Community Agents, AHI provides other agricultural services through National Agricultural Research Organization (NARO).

Despite the anticipated relevance, community representatives indicated associated problems or barriers to using ICTs. The common mentioned ones included:

- High costs
- Lack of skills
- Limited/low sensitization and awareness
- Unreliable telephone services
- Lack of reliable power.
- Content that might not be relevant to local needs.

To minimise some of the above barriers, some suggestions were made by the community representatives to make use and application of ICTs attractive. These include:

- Community sensitisation
- Free ICT services
- Training of users
- Base contents on researched work in prospective community users

The feeling generally was that once some of the problems associated with usage and application of ICTs are addressed, ICTs could be very helpful and vital in community development especially in easing communication and accessing people to vital information required in carrying out their day to day activities.

4.1.1.8 Changes Resulting from using ICTs

Use and application of ICTs is ideally supposed to result into changes on the part of the individual, community or organisations. In this particular respect, individual respondents were asked to indicate areas in which they had applied ICTs (i.e., basically limited to using telephone) and the changes noticed or experienced. Although the sample was small, the responses obtained provide some general direction about the nature of changes as shown in Table 17 below. The responses in Table 17 are based on 45 respondents who indicated that had used ICTs.

Table 17: Changes Noticed/Experienced on Account of Using ICTs

| Area in which ICTS are Used/Applied | Changes Noticed/Experienced | | |
|---|--|-------------|--|
| | | % | |
| 1. Work | Easy communication | 31.8 | |
| | Easy to set school examinations | 9.1 | |
| | Easy to carry out business | 13.6 | |
| 2. Contact with Family Member | Easy to solve family problems | 7.8 | |
| | Minimise transport costs | 7.8 | |
| | Easy communication | 14.3 | |
| | Enhanced socialisation | 5.3 | |
| 3. Commercial, market or trade information | Easy communication | 0.5 | |
| | Effective transaction | 1.0 | |
| 4. Research or Educational Information | Advancement | 0.2 | |
| | New knowledge | 0.2 | |
| 5. Health or sanitation information | Avoidance of diseases | 1.3 | |
| 6. Agricultural Information | High yielding crops information | 1.3 | |

What is clear in the above Table is that a few respondents who had used or applied ICTs in various aspects indicated that they had noticed changes in relation to easy communication in their work and contacting family members. Despite this low usage, the potential of people to use ICTs with the aim of changing their socio-

economic situation exists. Once the two projects take off, there will be need to intensively sensitize and train the target users in the use and application of ICTs. For, at the time of this study CEEWA had just started training in Nabweru and Buwama.

Regarding changes in the community as a result of introducing or using ICTs, a third of respondents (33.3%; n = 26), concurred that the introduction of ICTs had brought about changes in their communities. See Table 18.

Table 18: Nature of Change Noticed/Experienced in Community on Account of Introduction of ICTs

| Change Noticed | Nature of Change | % | N |
|--|---|----------|----------|
| 1. Capacity Building | Use of computer | 6.4 | 5 |
| | Employment opportunity | 1.3 | 1 |
| | Improved communication | 2.6 | 2 |
| | Modernization | 2.6 | 2 |
| | Realization of self potential | 2.6 | 2 |
| | Others | 2.6 | 2 |
| 2. Improvement of Health and Sanitary Condition | Availability of health information | 3.8 | 3 |
| | Others | 2.6 | 2 |
| 3.Improvement of Educational Condition | Little money generated | 1.3 | 1 |
| | Skills | 5.1 | 4 |
| 4. Increase in Revenue | Generation of income | 3.6 | 2 |
| 5. Job Creation | Employment | 16.7 | 13 |
| | Increased income for owners | 1.3 | 1 |
| | Others | 1.3 | 1 |
| 6. Improvement in Production, e.g. Agricultural Production | Improved farming methods | 2.6 | 2 |
| 7. Greater Participation in the Management of Local Affairs | Security purposes | 1.3 | 1 |
| 8. Improvement in the Position of Women and or Young People | Improved economic status | 5.1 | 4 |
| | Acquisition of new skills by young people (sending e-mail, fax) | 1.3 | 1 |
| 9. Better accommodation to information | Improvement in communication | 9.0 | 7 |
| | Easy contacts with business people | 1.3 | 1 |
| 10. Improved contact with farming members outside the village | Increased communication which saves transport costs | 20.5 | 17 |
| 11.Loss of traditional values | | 0.0 | 0 |
| 12. Introduction of new values | Modernization | 2.6 | 2 |

| | | | |
|--|-------------------|-----|---|
| | Internet services | 1.3 | 1 |
|--|-------------------|-----|---|

It is not plausible at this stage to refer to changes experienced in community as a result of ICTs since the Projects that were being evaluated are yet to implement their activities. Whatever changes were reported cannot be attributed to CEEWA and AHI, but provide some indications as to what the possible changes might be with full introduction ICTs.

Organizations and ICTs Use

Membership in Organizations

The evaluation instruments incorporated issues regarding individual membership in organization. This study attempted to investigate organizations which members belonged to and their type. Majority of respondents (78.2%; n = 61) belonged to some organisation or association in their town/village. Organisations or associations to which community members belonged, were varied as shown in Table 19.

Table 19: Organisation or Association which Community Members Belonged
Organizations/Associations*

| | % | N |
|-------------------------------------|------|----|
| Community Development Organizations | 47.4 | 37 |
| Professional | 9.0 | 7 |
| Cultural Organizations | 30.8 | 24 |
| Economic Organization | 24.4 | 19 |
| Others | 1.3 | 1 |

***Multiple Responses Allowed**

What are referred to as “community development organizations” were mainly CBOs that are formed to advance the interest of the members. These CBOs are all small, some with no office premises, but with leadership. In the circumstances, CBOs do not have any communication infrastructure. With exception of Jjalaba and Katebo, majority respondents belonged to organizations and associations. See Table 20 below.

Table 20: Respondents Membership in Organizations by Locality

| Sub-County | Parish | Received Training | |
|---------------|--------------|-------------------|------|
| | | Yes % | No % |
| Nakawa/CEEWA | Banda | 60.0 | 40.0 |
| | Bugolobi | 60.0 | 40.0 |
| | Bukoto | 60.0 | 40.0 |
| Nabweru/CEEWA | Kazo/Nabweru | 100.0 | 0.0 |
| | Manganjo | 100.0 | 0.0 |
| | Nansana | 50.0 | 50.0 |

| | | | |
|---------------------|------------------|-------------|-------------|
| | | | |
| Buwama/CEEWA | Mbizzinya | 83.3 | 16.7 |
| | Jalamba | 25.0 | 75.0 |
| | Katebo | 33.3 | 66.7 |
| Rubaya/AHI | Karujanga | 90.0 | 10.0 |
| | Kibuga | 92.3 | 7.7 |
| | Rwanyena | 92.3 | 7.7 |

Whether ICTs have been introduced in organisations or not, it remains pertinent that mobilising people through existing organisations to use and apply ICTs would be much easier than dealing with individuals. Thus existing organizations constitute critical entry point for introducing ICTs, usage and application.

4.1.2.2 Type of Existing Organizations

The type of organizations that majority respondents belonged to were community development or CBOs. Organizations that were economic in nature such as rotating credit/revolving fund organizations were not common in CEEWA project area as compared to AHI Project area. See Table 21.

Table 21: Type of Organizations Respondents Belonged by Locality

| Sub-County | Parish | Type of Organization | | | | |
|----------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------|
| | | CDO | Prof. Organ. | Cult. Organ. | Econ. Organ. | Others |
| | | % | % | % | % | % |
| Nakawa/CEEWA | Banda | 60.0 | 20.0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | Bugolobi | 60.0 | 0.0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | Bukoto | 60.0 | 20.0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Nabweru/CEEWA | Kazo/Nabweru | 60.0 | 20.0 | 0 | 60.0 | 0 |
| | Manganjo | 60.0 | 0.0 | 20.0 | 60.0 | 0 |
| | Nansana | 25.0 | 0.0 | 25.0 | 0 | 0 |
| Buwama/CEEWA | Mbizzinya | 83.3 | 0.0 | 0 | 0 | 10.0 |
| | Jalamba | 25.0 | 0.0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | Katebo | 33.3 | 0.0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Rubaya/AHI | Karujanga | 40.0 | 20.0 | 40.0 | 60.0 | 85.7 |
| | Kibuga | 76.9 | 15.4 | 46.2 | 46.2 | 83.3 |
| | Rwanyena | 0.0 | 0.0 | 92.3 | 7.7 | 100.0 |

Cultural organizations were mainly those that are locally known as “munno mukambi”, loosely translated as “when your neighbour is in danger”. They are not driven by any economic motive but rather for members to

pull resources together to assist a neighbour in case of death or any other problem that might befall the family. Most of the respondents met in this study were merely ordinary members in their respective organizations. See Table 22.

Table 22: Respondents Function in the Organization

| Sub-County | Parish | Function | | | |
|---------------|--------------|-------------------|--------------------|----------------|---------|
| | | Ordinary Member % | Executive Member % | Board Member % | Other % |
| Nakawa/CEEWA | Banda | 66.7 | 33.3 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| | Bugolobi | 66.7 | 33.3 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| | Bukoto | 33.3 | 66.7 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Nabweru/CEEWA | Kazo/Nabweru | 40.0 | 60.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| | Manganjo | 80.0 | 20.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| | Nansana | 100.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Buwama/CEEWA | Mbizzinya | 60.0 | 20.0 | 20.0 | 0.0 |
| | Jalamba | 100.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| | Katebo | 100.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Rubaya/AHI | Karujanga | 55.6 | 33.3 | 0.0 | 11.1 |
| | Kibuga | 58.3 | 33.3 | 8.3 | 0.0 |
| | Rwanyena | 66.7 | 25.0 | 0.0 | 8.3 |

Majority respondents indicated absence of ICTs in their respective organizations. In a few organizations especially professional where respondents indicated that ICTs had been introduced, they were introduced with donor funding/support as part of the project.

4.1.2.3 Anticipated Changes in Organizations as result of ICTs

Majority of respondents (73.3%) were of the view that ICTs would culminate into positive changes for their organisations. The type of envisaged changes as mentioned by respondents included:

- Easy communication
- Easy mobilization of members
- Improved management
- Easy planning and organisation

Apart from the organizations which members belonged, there are organizations in all the project areas that would benefit from the introduction of ICTs. The social maps of covered communities that were drawn indicated existence of the following in various areas.

Schools; a few secondary and several primary.

A vocational institute in Rubaya Sub-county
Churches (Roman Catholics, Anglican, SDAs) and mosques
Health Centres/Units in all Parishes and Sub-hospital at Rubaya Sub-county headquarter.

Community Response and Participation

Community response and participation can objectively be assessed if the projects in question have reached full implementation. Despite this limitation, it can still be observed that community response and participation differed from the two projects. For instance, it was very easy to notice a high level of participation in the AHI – Acacia project than the CEEWA Project as already indicated in 4.1.1.7. Earlier it was indicated that both the Rubaya Sub-County and Kabale District Council had donated buildings to house the project. This is an indicator of community participation. In the AHI- Acacia Project, the locals at various levels sit of the Project committees, which is an indicator of positive community response and participation in the project. It has to be noted that AHI- Acacia project given its scope (i.e., covering all community members) and objectives is likely to attract more positive response and community involvement than the CEEWA – Acacia Project, which is targeting a small number of community members.

5.0 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Lessons from the Evaluation

The Economic Empowerment of Women Through ICTs, Kampala and The African Highlands Eco-Regional Program, Acacia Project, Kabale have been running for over a year since they were approved. Both Projects are still in the early stages of implementation, though at different stages. The common similarity is that both projects are yet to implement activities, which will lead them to realise their goals and objectives. In both instances, potential beneficiaries are yet to be exposed to ICTs, use and apply them.

The above notwithstanding, some positive lessons can be learnt from the implementation of the projects. The level of involvement of all stakeholders in the projects, especially AHI - Kabale both at the District and lower levels promises sustainability. The donation of the buildings by the respective authorities in Kabale is a demonstration of keen interest in the project and continuity once the project funding elapses. At the same time, the Project will help NARO do what it is supposed to do as a Government agency. Interviews with NARO staff revealed that information needs are continuous and hence, ready to continue providing agricultural information once the Project ended.

Community projects require mechanisms of sustainability in-built at the early stages of proposal writing. Whereas the ingredients of sustainability could be easily deciphered in the case of AHI-Acacia Project, Kabale, it was not clear as to the CEEWA – Acacia project will be sustained or continued once the IDRC funding stopped. Again, whereas CEEWA works through the existing telecentres of Nabweru and Buwama, these telecentres have their own unique problems that the project will have to contend with, which could instead undermine sustainability rather than promoting it.

Challenges that the two projects will have to contend with apart from sustainability are unfolding. Modern ICTs are relatively new in the context of the two project areas. But, amidst this, there is vital need for information. The challenge as several key informants put it is how to disseminate relevant information through user-friendly mechanisms. The structure already created by AHI- Acacia Project, Kabale is a way of ensuring that the Telecentre gets information from the people, defines and interprets it. As the official of NARO noted,

“the farmer says he wants good seeds”. But what are good seeds? Thus, the challenge is for those involved in repackaging and disseminating information to interpret the various information needs so that they suit the needs of the people. The baseline studies; one for CEEWA completed in October 2000, and that of AHI-Kabale yet to be completed provide pertinent areas of information needs.

The unanticipated events that take place after the project has been approved need to be catered for in the proposal writing as “risks” and internal mechanisms worked out to minimize the negative impact. The resigning of an officer with INCRAF which was supposed to implement the current AHI- Acacia Project in a way stalled the Project. The transfer of the Project to AHI, and the recruitment of the Project Manager in July 1999 meant that for over a year, there were no activities being implemented. The same problem seemed to have been experienced by CEEWA when one of the officers who started the Project left the organisation.

Finally, the major lesson we learn from the evaluation of AHI- Kabale and CEEWA Acacia projects is that assessment of project’s failures and successes needs to be timely in order for the evaluation to be of much value. We note that projects can be approved at the same time, but the pace of implementation will differ from project to project, which makes commissioning of evaluation for all projects approved at the same time rather unfeasible. Each project needs to be focused on as an independent entity so as to formulate relevant and applicable research questions.

5.2 Recommendations

The recommendations presented in this report emerge from the study findings, as well as the dissemination workshop.

5.2.1 Recommendations from the Research Findings

It is difficult at this to make concrete recommendations given that the Projects are yet to take off. However, a few pertinent suggestions arise out of the study findings.

Sensitization and mobilization of potential beneficiaries of ICTs through their community representatives is an entry point to make the Projects succeed. AHI- Acacia Project, Kabale seems to be doing well in this direction. It however, needs to reach the grassroot population beyond the community representatives.

Although CEEWA-Acacia Project plans to work through the existing telecentres of Nabweru and Buwama, it might consider learning from the experience of AHI, Kabale (although not yet tested) of forming local structures to oversee the Project implementation. This has an advantage of creating a sense of ownership among stakeholders, and possibly contribute towards sustainability of the Project..

Given the fact that modern ICTs are new in our context, not easily accessible coupled with the low levels of education of the population, it should not be expected that majority of users will access information at the telecentres. Out reach programs will have to be emphasised where trained staff will retrieve and repackage the information for dissemination through appropriate means such as community meetings, radio etc.

For CEEWA – Acacia Project which plans to work through the existing Telecentres, whether it stations its own staff at these telecentres or not, it will need to make clear how the Telecentre staff will be involved, and possibly what their roles might be. Expectations are bound to arise on the part of the Telecentre staff, which CEEWA might not be in position to satisfy.

Finally, the pace of implementation seems to be very slow. All efforts should be put in place to get the projects

take off.

5.2.2 Recommendations arising from the Dissemination Workshop

General recommendations were made during the validation and dissemination workshop. Most of the recommendations, which emerged in the workshop were similar to the ones arising from the study findings. A few recommendations that were not captured by the study included:

There is need to quicken and expedite the process of fund disbursement from IDRC to the Projects. It was felt by participants from CEEWA and AHI, that there is too much bureaucracy in fund disbursement.

There is need for increased awareness and publicity of the projects more than it is currently happening. Coupled with this, participants recommended establishment of partnerships with organisations that could benefit from ICTs.

It was recommended that the content of the messages must be relevant to the needs of the beneficiaries, and should be packaged in a user-friendly manner. The baseline studies of the two projects were expected to provide a direction of what the local relevant needs are, and how such content could be packaged.

It was also recommended that the ICT services need to be heavily subsidised at the beginning so as to attract the users up to the time on their own can appreciate the value of ICTs in order to contribute towards the usage of ICTs.

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APPENDIX 1

EVALUATION INSTRUMENTS

APPENDIX 2

**DISSEMINATION AND VALIDATION WORKSHOP HELD ON MARCH 29, 2001
AT FAIRWAY HOTEL, KAMPALA, UGANDA**

A LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

| Name | Organization/Designation |
|------------------------|--|
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| Tushabe Florence | Project Manager, Kabale Telecentre |
| Sunday Mutabazi | Director of Production, Kabale LC V & Member of the AHI Technical Committee |
| Bukuba John Tumwesigye | Chairman, Rubaya Satellite Telecentre |
| Baguma K. Grace | NCDC |
| Katabalwa Deborah | CEEWA Beneficiary, Kampala |
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